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PRESS RELEASE

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Court Hearing for Highway 41 Collision Postponed

Today in Madera Superior Court, the defense counsel for Justin Eugene Rice requested postponement of a January 22, 2010 preliminary hearing. Judge John Degroot granted a continuance of the hearing until February 22, 2010, in order to allow the defense time to conduct further investigation.

Madera County District Attorney Michael Keitz has charged Rice with a total of 10 counts including murder, vehicular manslaughter and driving under the influence. The charges against Rice stem from an August 20, 2009 automobile collision on Highway 41 which killed three people and injured two others. All of the victims were employees of the Chukchansi Indian Casino.

A preliminary hearing is a determination by a judge to ensure there is enough evidence to hold the defendant to answer for charges by the trial court.